

I have devoted most of my higher education career to serving low-income families in four different states. It is only since coming to Connecticut did I find a state that was willing to partner with philanthropic organizations to fund parent leadership programs. The parent leadership efforts in Connecticut are the envy of other states and a critical measure of how families are valued. I sincerely hope that funding for the Parent Trust Fund will be reinstated in the state budget. The match provided by the Graustein Foundation makes the program's reach far exceed the monetary investment made by the state.

The University of Connecticut offers administrative oversight for the UCONN PEP (People Empowering People) program. The program is offered in communities all over the state through Family Resource Centers, Community Partnerships, Discovery Centers, Faith Based Communities and school districts. Our evidence shows that graduates improve personal strengths, parent/family relationships and community engagement. Last year alone over 5,000 hours of community service was provided by UCONN PEP participants.

In partnership with the Commission on Children's Parent Leadership Institute and the Parents SEE program, parents in the state have an opportunity to build on their unique strengths and life experiences to improve their families and their communities. Communities throughout Connecticut benefit because parents gain leadership skills and they take action to address issues in their communities.

PLEASE reinstate the Parent Trust Funds. Thank you!

**Cathleen T. Love, Ph.D.**

Professor



1376 Storrs Road, Unit 4036

Storrs, CT 06269-4036

860-486-9081

860-486-0264 (fax)

[Cathleen.love@uconn.edu](mailto:Cathleen.love@uconn.edu)